

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 1, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to you in regards to chemical contamination on military bases across America that is hurting our veterans, their families and the communities where these bases are located.

People living on or near current and former military installations across the country are being exposed to contamination in their drinking water from perfluorinated chemicals (PFCs). PFCs are found in the firefighting foam that historically was used in large quantities throughout military bases and has subsequently now leaked into the nearby groundwater.

In 2016, recognizing the magnitude of this issue, the Department of Defense (DoD) identified and began testing 664 sites with potential PFC contamination based on past activities.¹ PFC contamination is a nationwide concern, with a recent study released by Northeastern University demonstrating that PFCs have been identified in drinking water systems in 27 states and in the tap water supplies of 15 million people.²

PFCs are extremely persistent in the environment, break down very slowly and bioaccumulate in humans. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, studies have shown that PFCs can affect the developing fetus and child, including possible changes in growth, learning, and behavior; decrease fertility and interfere with the body's natural hormones; increase cholesterol levels; affect the immune system; and increase cancer risk.³

PFCs are a dangerous chemical, the full impact of which is still unknown, and it is critical that DoD take immediate action to prevent further exposure. Despite the danger PFCs present, DoD has been slow to provide safe drinking water to those areas with contaminated water. For more than a year, members of Congress have repeatedly requested that DoD prioritize investigations of

¹ Jennifer McDermott, "The military plans to examine whether chemicals from firefighting foam may have contaminated groundwater at 664 sites nationwide, officials say," *Associated Press*, March 10, 2016, <https://www.usnews.com/news/us/articles/2016-03-10/military-to-check-for-water-contamination-at-664-sites> (accessed June, 2017).

² Keith Matheny, "Report: Toxins from nonstick chemicals in drinking water of 15M nationwide," *USA Today*, June 8, 2017, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2017/06/08/report-toxins-drinking-water/380763001/> (accessed Month X, 2017).

³ Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, "Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances and Your Health," https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/pfc/health_effects_pfc.html (accessed Month X, 2017).

contamination on its sites and provide safe drinking water for these impacted areas. Yet there are still veterans, their families and surrounding communities exposed to PFC-contaminated drinking water that the DoD has yet to address.

We ask that the Administration hasten the DoD's response to the issue of PFC contamination. We have asked our service members to make critical sacrifices for our freedom and we must assure them that they, and their families, have access to safe drinking water.

We look forward to working with you on this issue of critical importance.

Sincerely,



Daniel T. Kildee
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Brian Fitzpatrick
MEMBER OF CONGRESS



Lisa Blunt Rochester
MEMBER OF CONGRESS


Patrick Meehan
MEMBER OF CONGRESS


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